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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/089,975	04/08/2002	Volker Reiffenrath	MERCK 2405	3306

23599 7590 08/07/2003
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EXAMINER

WU, SHEAN CHIU

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

1756

DATE MAILED: 08/07/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/089,975

Applicant(s)

REIFFENRATH ET AL.

Examiner

Shean C Wu

Art Unit

1756

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-12 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-12 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on ____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
3. ☒ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 4.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s) ____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other:

Art Unit: 1756

DETAILED ACTION

1. Claims 4 and 9 are objected to because of the following informalities:

In Claim 4, the notation "M" should be changed to -- m --.

In Claim 9, line 1, the "ir" should be changed to -- it --.

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

2. Claim 11 provides for the use of liquid crystal medium, but, since the claim does not set forth any steps involved in the method/process, it is unclear what method/process applicant is intending to encompass. A claim is indefinite where it merely recites a use without any active, positive steps delimiting how this use is actually practiced.

Claim 11 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the claimed recitation of a use, without setting forth any steps involved in the process, results in an improper definition of a process, i.e., results in a claim which is not a proper process claim under 35 U.S.C. 101. See for example *Ex parte Dunki*, 153 USPQ 678 (Bd.App. 1967) and *Clinical Products, Ltd. v. Brenner*, 255 F. Supp. 131, 149 USPQ 475 (D.D.C. 1966).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Art Unit: 1756

4. Claims 1-6 and 11-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by EP 446,911.

The reference discloses that fluorobenzene derivatives of the formula (I) are new and useful for liquid crystal display devices and electrooptical display devices. See the compounds on page 2, line 40 and line 50. Also, see the general formulae Ib, Id-If, Ii-II from page 4 to page 5. The reference anticipates the claimed invention.

5. Claims 1-6 and 11-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by EP 738,709.

The reference discloses that fluorobenzene derivatives of the formula (I) having large dielectric anisotropic value and a small change in the threshold depending upon temperature are new and useful for liquid crystal display devices and electrooptical display devices. See the compounds 340, 352 and 389. The reference anticipates the claimed invention.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

6. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

7. Claims 1-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over EP 738,709.

Art Unit: 1756

The reference differs from the claimed invention in that the claimed compound and composition are not exemplified in the specification. However, the claimed compound and additional compounds used in the present liquid crystal composition are disclosed and taught in the specification (see formulae 1-2, 1-10, 1-11, 1-17, 1-19 and 1-24). Additional compounds of claim 6 are disclosed on page 20-28. Also, see formulae (2)-(4) and (8-1). Therefore, it would have been obvious to those skilled in the art to utilize the reference teaching by optimizing and mixing the disclosed compound to arrive at the claimed invention.

8. Claims 1-6 and 11-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by EP 738,709.

The reference discloses that fluorobenzene derivatives of the formula I having extremely short switching time and good steepness and angle dependency are new and useful for liquid crystal display devices and electrooptical display devices. See the compounds 340, 352 and 389. The reference anticipates the claimed invention.

Double Patenting

9. The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. See *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and, *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground

Art Unit: 1756

provided the conflicting application or patent is shown to be commonly owned with this application. See 37 CFR 1.130(b).

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

10. Claims 6-8 and 10-12 are rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1, 2-10, 12 and 18 of U.S. Patent No. 6,521,303. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because the claimed liquid crystal medium and display thereof overlap each other. See the formula Ivg in Claim 18, which has a similar chemical structure.

Conclusion

11. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

12. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Shean C Wu whose telephone number is 703-308-3956. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday 9:30 -6:00.

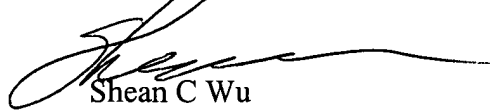
If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Mark Huff can be reached on 703-308-2464. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-305-7718 for regular communications and 703-872-9311 for After Final communications.

Application/Control Number: 10/089,975

Page 6

Art Unit: 1756

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-308-0661.



Sean C Wu
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1756

scw

August 4, 2003